

August 18, 2008

### **Commissioner's Comments by Dave Schulz**

We hope those of you who attended the Madison County Fair enjoyed it as much as we did. There were more activities, vendors and participants than recent years. And, it appeared more fairgoers were at the fair. We want to say thanks to the Fair Board for continuing to be sightful of making your fair better each year. Fair Manager, Dana Escott, has done a superb job of managing the crews, readying the grounds, bringing in vendors, getting the carnival (which we have not had for a number of years), and helping all facets of the fair work well together. I particularly enjoy watching the youth work with their animals in readying for the judging, marketing and sale. Again this year, the 4-H sale appeared to be a tremendous success.

The rodeo was likewise a great success. The stock was exceptional. The Arena Club ran the rodeo in top style and persons I talked to commented that this was one of the best rodeos our Fair week has seen. We wish to express our thanks and support to the 3 Rivers Arena Club for all you do throughout the year to make the rodeo grounds the best in southwest Montana, the fair rodeo increasingly successful, and for offering and managing numerous other events throughout the year. (I wonder how many dollars through the year are brought into Twin Bridges, the Ruby Valley and the County because of the fair, rodeos and other fair grounds related activities?)

The parade on Sunday had many entries and the streets were lined with many of you. It, too, was a lot of fun and superbly managed. Again, thanks to everyone who worked at, participated in and enjoyed your Madison County Fair and Rodeo.

In other Madison County news, the Ennis Big Sky airport reconstruction work is well underway. This is a major project with a lot of equipment moving a lot of mother earth. We predict the project to be complete in early October. And, the Commission recently awarded a contract for replacement of three bridges. Work on the Coy Brown bridge south of Alder, the first bridge on South Boulder road, and the bridge on Cherry Creek east of the Madison River will soon be underway. Regular users should expect some interruption but it should be minimal. The Bear Creek bridge east of Cameron is also listed for replacement but will likely not be completed till next spring.

Several weeks ago, I was part of a three County Commission delegation that traveled to Washington DC to discuss the Beaverhead-Deerlodge Forest Plan and concerns we have with the plan and the process the Forest used in developing that plan. We met with several top persons in the Forest and Department of Agricultural as well as our delegation on the issue. We expect to visit Governor Schweitzer regarding this, as well. Should you want to learn more, please contact our office.

Regarding another topic, continuation of air service out of Butte appears to be threatened as several letters from the Butte Chamber of Commerce to our office have indicated. This has been an issue also addressed in the Montana Standard. In the letter, they are asking for funding assistance to maintain secure service. Prior to having input, we are asking residents of Madison County who use the Butte airport to share your interest in continued or expanded service from that airport. Your questions or thoughts on this issue are appreciated.

Our regular meeting of August 19<sup>th</sup> is in Big Sky. We will report more in the near future. Enjoy the warm days; there aren't many left!